

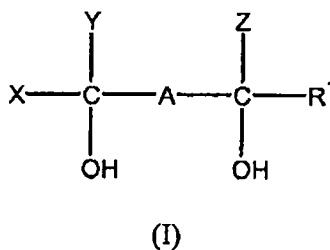
AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims without prejudice, without admission, without surrender of subject matter, and without any intention of creating any estoppel as to equivalents, as follows.

NOTE: Claim identifiers reflect the status of the claims relative to the amendment filed on 10 July 2006. Please contact the undersigned if this amendment has not been received.

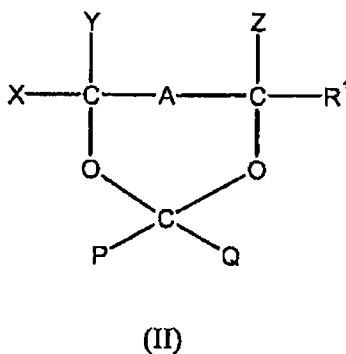
In the Claims:

1. (previously presented) A process for the preparation of a polymerisable composition comprising a cross-linker and a polymerisable monomer of formula I



comprising the steps of:

(i) contacting a compound of formula II



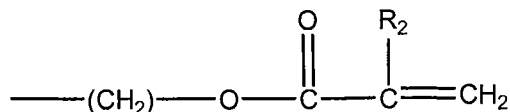
with an immobilised acid,

wherein X, Y, Z, P and Q are independently selected from a hydrocarbyl group or hydrogen,

A is (CH₂)_n, wherein n is 0 or 1; and

wherein:

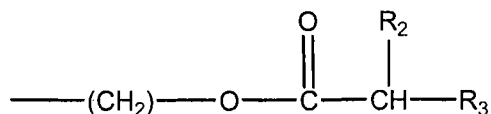
R¹ is a group of the formula IIIA



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R² is selected from the group consisting of H, methyl, ethyl, propyl and butyl, or

R¹ is group of formula IIIB



IIIB

R² is selected from the group consisting of methyl, ethyl, propyl and butyl, and

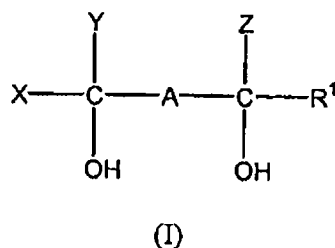
R³ is an unsaturated C₂₋₅ alkyl; and

(ii) neutralising the product of step (i) such that the cross-linker is formed.

2. (original) A process according to claim 1 wherein the acid is a strong acid.
3. (original) A process according to claim 1 wherein the acid is immobilised on an ion exchange resin.
4. (original) A process according to claim I wherein X and Y are independently selected from hydrocarbon groups having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms and hydrogen.

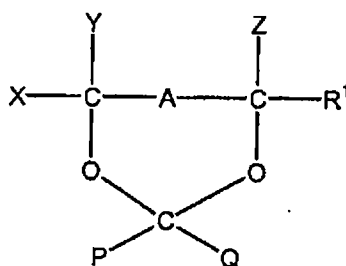
5. (currently amended) A process according to claim 1 wherein R^1 is a group of formula IIIA
~~formula IIIB~~, wherein R^2 is CH_3 .
6. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1 wherein X is H; Y is H; Z is H; and $n = 0$ and R^1 is a group of formula IIIA in which R^2 is CH_3 .
- 7-8. (cancelled)
9. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1 comprising containing the immobilised acid, contacting the immobilised acid with the compound of formula II and passing a gas through the immobilised acid.
10. (original) A process according to claim 9 wherein the gas is air.
11. (original) A process according to claim 9 wherein the immobilised acid is contacted with the compound of formula II in the absence of an organic solvent.
12. (original) A process according to claim 1 step (i) is performed in the presence of water.
13. (previously presented) A process according to claim 9 wherein containing the immobilised acid comprises a fluidised bed reactor.
14. (previously presented) A process according to claim 9 wherein the process comprises extracting the gas from the contained immobilised acid after the gas has passed through the immobilised acid.

15. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1 wherein the process further comprises the step of polymerising the polymerisable monomer of formula I, whereby a polymer is formed.
16. (currently amended) A process according to claim 1 ~~claim 15~~ wherein an acid is formed during the process and said acid is methacrylic acid.
17. (currently amended) A process according to claim 1 ~~claim 15~~ wherein an acid is formed during the process and said acid is acrylic acid.
18. (original) A process according to claim 15 further comprising forming an ocular device from the polymer.
19. (currently amended) A polymerisable monomer or composition obtained in accordance ~~with~~ with a process as defined in claim 1.
20. (previously presented) A polymer obtained in accordance with a process as defined in claim 15.
21. (original) An ocular device prepared in accordance with a process as defined in claim 18.
22. (currently amended) A process for the preparation of a polymerisable composition comprising a cross-linker and a polymerisable monomer of formula I



comprising the steps of:

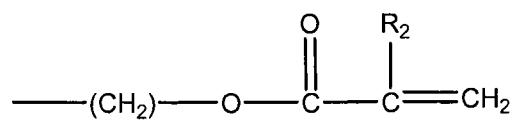
(i) contacting a compound of formula II



(II)

with an immobilised acid,
having a pKa of less than 3,

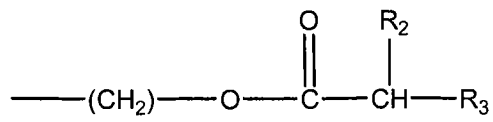
wherein X and Y are independently selected from hydrocarbon groups having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms and hydrogen, R¹ is selected from hydrocarbon groups having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms and hydrocarbyl esters, Z, P and Q are independently selected from a hydrocarbyl group or hydrogen, and wherein A is (CH₂)_n, wherein n is 0 or 1; and wherein R¹ is a group of the formula IIIA



IIIA

wherein R² is selected from H, methyl, ethyl, propyl and butyl;

or R¹ is a group of formula IIIB



IIIB

R² is selected from the group consisting of methyl, ethyl, propyl and butyl, and

R³ is an unsaturated C₂₋₅ alkyl; and

(ii) neutralising the product of step (i) such that the cross-linker is formed.